We claim:

1. A process for preparing hydrocyanic acid (HCN) by catalytic dehydration of gaseous formamide in a reactor which has an inner reactor surface made of a steel comprising iron and chromium and nickel.

2. A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the reactor contains no additional internals and/or catalysts.

3. A process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the steel contains nickel and chromium in a ratio of from 1:1 to 1:2.

4. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the inner reactor surface is made of a steel comprising ≥ 60% by weight of iron.

5. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the pressure/load ratio is from 1 to 100 kg of formamide/m^2 of reactor surface, preferably from 5 to 80 kg of formamide/m^2 of reactor surface.

6. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the preparation of hydrocyanic acid is carried out in the presence of atmospheric oxygen, preferably from 10 to 50 standard l of air/kg of formamide.

7. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6 carried out at from 350 to 650°C.

8. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the reactor is a tube reactor having one or more tubes.

9. A reactor for preparing hydrocyanic acid by catalytic dehydration of gaseous formamide, which has an inner reactor surface made of a steel comprising iron and chromium and nickel.

10. A reactor as claimed in claim 9, wherein the steel comprises nickel and chromium in a ratio of from 1:1 to 1:2.

11. A reactor as claimed in claim 9 or 10, wherein the inner reactor surface is made up of a steel comprising ≥ 60% by weight of iron.

12. The use of a reactor as claimed in any of claims 9 to 11 in a process for preparing hydrocyanic acid by catalytic dehydration of gaseous formamide.

13. The use as claimed in claim 12, wherein the reactor contains no additional internals and/or catalysts.